MilAtari Limited Edition

Volume X Issue 11 • December 1991 • The Newsletter of choice for Milwaukee Area Atari Enthusiasts since 1981

Santa says "Be sure to attend the MilAtari Christmas Party! I've got a bag full of goodies to give to club members....ho ho ho!"

This Month:

Christmas Party

Saturday, December 21, Noon
Greenfield Park Lutheran Church
1236 S. 115th Street

Executive Board Meeting:

Date to be announced
Shakey's
9638 W. National Avenue

Next Month:

General Meeting
Saturday, January 18, 1992

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MilAtari Ltd.
P.O. Box 14038
West Allis, WI 53214

Membership

Membership in MilAtari Ltd. is open to all individuals and families interested in computing. Annual dues are $20.00 for individuals or $25.00 per family. Membership includes a one year subscription to the MilAtari Limited Edition, access to the Publication Library, and allows purchases from all Public Domain Libraries as well as the Resale Shop.

Meetings

MilAtari Meetings are normally held on the third Saturday of each month at Greenfield Park Lutheran Church, 1236 S. 115th St. The doors open at noon. There is an hour milling period for members to socialize while browsing through the Publication Library, and making their purchases from the PD Libraries and Resale shop. We also have a station set up to demonstrate the newest ST PD offerings, or to help members with specific software problems with hands on assistance. The Business meeting begins at 1:00 p.m. Afterwards there are demonstrations of commercial software or small instructional groups form.

Newsletter

The MilAtari Ltd. Edition is published by and for MilAtari Ltd.Opinions expressed herein are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of MilAtari Ltd., its officers or advertisers, none of which are affiliated in any way with Atari Corp., except where noted otherwise.

Submissions are encouraged, and can be sent via the Club BBS, or by making other arrangements with the Editor. All submissions should be in ASCII or WordWriter format please, with NO special formatting such as centered text, tabs, or bold, italics, etc. All submissions are due by the 25th of each month. For information on placing ads, contact the Editor at 628-4435.

Equipment used for the MilAtari Limited Edition consists of a Mega 4 ST, Unisys Laser printer, and Pagestream 2.

MilAtari Ltd. Bulletin Board

MilAtari Ltd. supports a public bulletin board system. Members and non-members alike are welcome to use the service. When applying for a password for first time use, please allow one week for validation. All requested information must be supplied or the SysOp reserves the right to deny access. Only real names are allowed. If you are having trouble getting on or around in our system, call one of the officers or volunteers listed above.

MilAtari Ltd. collects 5.5% state and county sales tax on all purchases, including membership dues, as is required by law.

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Notice:

The deadline for the January issue of the MilAtari Ltd. Edition is **December 26th** (due to Christmas).

The Editor

MilAtari Ltd. BBS

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Presidential Ruminations

"If you smile at me I will understand, because that is something that everybody everywhere does in the same language."

-DAVID CROSBY

Well, the Chicago ComputerFest by Atari is history! After a few days of not even looking at my computer, I am ready to give a report on the show.

It is hard to say exactly how much of a success the show was. From MilAtari's point of view, it was a big one. Although it's true that we didn't fill our area anywhere near as much as we do at GEN CON, rest assured that the Gaming Area was handled in a professional manner by some of the best volunteer people that I have ever had the pleasure to work with! And, having it less busy gave those of us at the show time to enjoy it all the more.

I would like to thank everyone who took the time out to travel out to Chicago and help out. You know who you are!

Mark Pincek from Taylor, Michigan was the all time Midi-Maze Champion at the show, with a total of four wins under his belt. A number of LYNX tournaments were held with the help of Clinton Smith, editor of A.P.E.

Despite the light interest in gaming, we did not come out in the red, thanks to the efforts of our Swap [Area] Team. Due to the added purchase, and subsequent resale of all of the remaining Atari hardware from SYSTECH Electonics, we were able to make up all of our expenses and then some. (Tom tells me that there is still a lot of 8-Bit & ST chips and other STuff left that will be in the Resale Shop until it's gone.) A full financial report on the show will be given at the Christmas Party.

BTW, Mike from SYSTECH has informed me that by the time you read this SYSTECH should be relocated within the fine establishment called GK Enterprises.

Party? Did someone say party? Our meeting on the 21st will double as the

club's Christmas party. Please try to attend; there will be many prizes given away, including a special drawing for the volunteers who worked the gaming area at the Computerfest.

You must attend the meeting in order to recieve any of the general door prizes which will be given out at the Christmas Party. However, any of the prizes chosen for the Computerfest volunteers will be delivered to them, somehow! Some lucky member is going to walk out of our meeting with Pagestream 2.1, compliments of Soft Logic Corp.

Also, try to bring a dish to pass; MilAtari will supply the soda & coffee! A slendid time is guaranteed for all (thanx John & Paul!).

Some final thoughts on the ComputerFest. One of the things that was mentioned to me more than once, and sticks in my mind, was how so many different User Groups could come together and work in unison so well. I'm also told that the total attendance for the show was just under 2500 people, which I think is an impressive number for the first year of this kind of show. I kept comparing it to the first year we did GEN CON, and look how that has grown!

Many thanxs to Greg Pratt & Bob Brodie and everyone from Atari for all their support and to Mike Brown, Larry Grauzas & all the folks at LCACE for asking us at MilAtari to help out. Now, about next year's show.....

A most Happy Holidays from your Board of Directors. Hope to see you on the 21st!

Lee

Desktop Publishing

Setting Text Attributes

Michelle Gross

Last month we left off at importing text into a frame. We will pick up now and explain the different text attributes that transforms your column of text into a readable, inviting, article to entice your audience.

We will be touching on the following four text attributes: typeface (font selection), style, size, and formatting. [Due to the differences between the two programs previously mentioned, I hesitate to discuss specifics on how to set these attributes. I direct you to your manual to make the changes for your own program. I will state, however, that Publisher shines in this area as far as the user interface in setting these attributes. Again, I must emphasize the ease of use in these features with Publisher, and encourage the novice to take a look at this program for initial use.]

Text attributes can vary or be changed from column to column, paragraph to paragraph, line to line, or even within the same word, using some DTP programs. This is where you set your headlines apart from your text body, your subheadlines, and emphasize paragraphs within an article.

Typeface (commonly referred to as fonts) is probably going to be your first selection. Typefaces are the rave in DTP today. There are thousands upon thousands to choose from, but they all really fall under two categories: serif and sans-serif.

The serif font is the first choice for blocks of body text. The little "tails" or more often called feet, on the serif type fonts provide an easy flow for the eye to move across the printed page, making it the choice for body text. The most common serif font is Times Roman, but there are many many variations. A popular font that is included with Pagestream 2, as well as a personal favorite of mine is Garamond, the font used for this body of text you are reading now.

The sans-serif fonts are typefaces without any decorative flourishes or tails. They are mostly used in headlines, and in small blocks of text used for emphasis, such as the pull-quote. The sans-serif font usually has the same thickness throughout the letter, unlike serif typefaces which vary in thickness at different points of the letter. When choosing the font to use, remember who your audience is, as well as the purpose of your document. You wouldn't, for example, use a bold sans-serif font on a wedding invitation. Likewise, you wouldn't expect fancy serif typefaces set in a technical journal. Try to fit the font into the statement you are making in your publication.

Another rule in font usage is to avoid getting carried away with too many different fonts on a page. Using a variety of serif fonts together distracts from the intended message and tends to overpower the reader. Normally you don't want to mix serif fonts with other serifs on the same page. A combination more pleasing to the eye would be a serif font with a sans-serif choice for headlines and sub-headlines.

Once you have selected your font, you will need to set your point size. Points is the measurement used in the printing industry to indicate the height of type. There are 72 points to the inch. The point size you select should be determined by a number of factors including: the importance of the message, the space it is set in, line length and line spacing. In text used for the body of a document, you must proportion the text to the width of your column. You would not want to put a 30 point text in a two inch wide column

such as this.

Likewise, you would not want to put a 9 point font inside a large frame. Normally 10 point font is the size recommended for body text in this type of publication.

"...you would not want to put a 9 point font inside a large frame."

Type style refers to the appearance of the typeface. Normal choices include bold, italics, shadowed, and others. These special attributes are rarely used for a body of text, and more often used for emphasis, headlines, and subheadings.

Finally, your program will have a means to set a variety of text formatting attributes. Most apparent is the justification of text. Choices include: centering, justifying a body of text so it is flush with the left margin, right margin or both. If you choose to justify text on both margins, then Pagestream allows you to further alter the spaces between the words and characters within the words. I would encourage you to experiment with these settings to determine what appeals to you. In the case of justification, I prefer, and have changed this newsletter to a left justified, ragged right format. I find the look inviting to the reader, and less formal. Others may prefer another look.

Another formatting option available to you is line spacing or "leading" (pronounced ledding). Leading is as important as type size. The amount of

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Eyewitness Report

Chicago ComputerFest

Mike Brown, President- LCACE

As most of you probably know, last weekend the Chicago ComputerFest by Atari was presented jointly by LCACE and Atari Corp. Before I get into talking about details of the show that most likely won't be covered in other reports, I'd like to take a moment and praise LCACE's Special Events Chairman, Larry Grauzas, and the members of the Chicago ComputerFest organizing committee (in no particular order): Dwight (JJ) Johnson, Steve Kostelnik, Dave Moriarity, Joe Julian, Larry Grauzas Sr. and Steve Yeaton. These gentlemen, (and their families) put their personal lives, non-show interests, and in some cases, their jobs, "on hold" for months to assure that we would have a professional and well presented show for all of you. I have nothing but praise and admiration for the fine performance shown by all of "our people" involved.

I would be remiss if I did not call your attention to the significant contributions made by our sister Atari User Groups - MilAtari (gaming area), MAST (security), RACC (8-bit and staff), SCAT (staff), and GCACE (staff). The 9 member groups of the Midwest Atari Regional Council (ACE St Louis, ASCII, BLAST, CUSTUG, EAUG, IMAGE, MDC-RCC, PAUG and STar) also contributed significantly by supplying volunteer labor for set-up, breakdown, and day-of-show activities; not to mention sponsoring the first annual MARC Excellence awards (more on that later).

Those of you out there who believe in "no Atari support", should have been there to help unload the _two truckloads_ of computers, display equipment, literature, promotions and handouts that Atari sent to the show site.

Each and every volunteer worker reporting to the Ramada convention center Friday night for show set-up nearly fell over with the sheer volume of equipment sent by Atari to be loaned to exhibitors or intended for show sales stock. Added to that were the nice cloth patches and other promotional items provided to the show by Atari for the attendees (was there anything left in Sunnyvale, Bob?).

Atari Corp. supported our efforts to get the news of the show out to the general public by sponsoring a LYNX giveaway contest on WLUP radio's "Steve and Gary" show, "Chet Coppuck on Sports", as well as the award- winning "Jonathon Brandmeier" morning show. In addition, we placed newspaper ads in all of the local college papers, and well-designed ads appeared in the "Friday" section of the Chicago Tribune (thanks Dave!). Our advertising budget alone for this show eclipsed the total show budget of both prior LCACE- sponsored AtariFests.

In addition to hardware, Atari provided over 25 Atari employees. They were not nameless folks either; Greg Pratt, Geoff Earle, Mark Campbell, Bill Rehbock, Mike

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DTP
from previous page

white space between the lines of text can open up and invite the reader, or in the case of too little white space, turn the reader off. This attribute can be set within your program. Again, I would encourage you to experiment on your own through trial and error, as well as using the resources mentioned in last month's article as a guide.

Although there are more advanced formatting options available, the last to be mentioned in this article, due to time and space restraints of my own, will be the margin indent. With this menu choice you can control whether the first line, or all lines, in a paragraph is flush, or indented and by how much. You may also be able to set the right margin separately, so as to set off a paragraph within a body of text. Notice the public domain listing in each issue of our newsletter. The hanging outdent is a result of margin and paragraph indent settings.

All of the above described type attributes can be set for each individual word, sentence, or paragraph, as I indicated earlier. However, the paragraph tag function of your DTP program will allow you to assign a variety of these attributes to a name or even function key. For instance, you may want all your body text to be Times font, 11 point, with a flush left margin and a ragged right. You might set up a headline tag to be a sans-serif style at 32 points, and centered within the frame. The paragraph tag function allows you to set all these different attributes at once. Then with a keystroke, or a click of the mouse you can transform a block of text into a work of art!

I hope my column has helped any of you new to the DTP world. If any of you have specific topics that you would like covered, let me know. Otherwise, be sure to tune in next month as I continue to share my DTP experiences. ♥

MAC Attack

Software - Atari vs. Mac

Bob Garlock

Games

Atari users like to play games. The computer is very good at game playing. I can't think of any Atari user who doesn't have a favorite game or two in his library. The Mac computer on the other hand seems to be designed to discourage game playing. Macs don't even have a place to plug in a joystick and color systems are just becoming popular.

Mac people, like most computer users, like to play games. However, the games you find on the Mac are a little different than what you find for an Atari or Amiga. The commercial offerings for Macs are limited, even by Atari standards. Most Mac games are shareware and some are quite good.

Pure arcade type programs are not real popular. Arcade games are left to the Nintendo. Mac people like to keep things in their proper place. Most Mac games will be strategy, puzzles or a combination of various types.

This month's Spectre Disk is a game disk that includes two very good games (see descriptions). One of the games is called "Glider". This is a very typical of a well written Mac game. Atari PD authors could take a few lessons here. First of all the user interface is a standard format. All of the options and settings are in drop down menus and follow the standard Mac format. The games instructions are available from the desktop and are easy to read. The next thing that becomes evident is that the graphics are first class. A lot of detail has gone into this non-commercial offering. Finally the game play itself is original and addictive. I'm reminded of the Atari game "Lemmings" (awesome game) on a smaller scale.

While there are a lot of good Mac games out there you will find that the percentage of games to applications is quite low. In conclusion, if games are want you want and your Atari isn't enough, look at the Super Nintendo or whatever.

Applications

Until the last year or so Mac application software seemed to be light years ahead of the Atari. Spreadsheet, Word Processing, Desk Top Publishing and other programs were far superior. The main advantage Atari had was in price. You could get a good, not a great program, for a great price. I don't think that is especially true any longer. The latest generation of Atari software is excellent. People from Code Head and others are the best in the business. The programs are original and bullet proof (for the most part). But don't think the Mac software people are just sitting around either.

The Mac PD and Shareware offerings have some nice examples of this software expertise. On our Spectre #1 disk there is a Shareware program called "Quill." Keep in mind that you can't read a Mac text file directly from the desktop. This desk accessory will load in and allow you to read the text file with scrolling up and down and most other the desirable features. Most Atari authors would stop right there and think they had a good one. Quill doesn't stop there. It also allows you to load in any of the popular word processing files and displays them with word wrapping in a scalable window. If graphics are in the file they can be displayed just by clicking on them. While this program is a reader and not an editor, it will allow you to save the word processing as a text file. That way if you don't own that particular word processor you can use the file. Nice feature, eh?

One note here is that Mac doc files use a lot of graphics. Mainly they are screen captures showing how to do user input. A lot of attention to detail. The hours some of these mac PD and Shareware authors spend on these details must be awesome.

Next time I'll get into a little more about the Mac desktop organization. Just when I think I got it under control, I find something else. From what I been reading about the TT's new operating system it sure seems they know how a Mac works.■

Spectre #7 Games

Kongbots 1.0

An action strategy game based on the board game by Fasa Corporation. You design your combat robot with armor, weapons and other features. There is a teach mode and team play. There is also a save game feature. Nice friendly combat, no pain.

Glider 3.1.2

An interesting game with excellent graphics. You build a paper plane and glide it through numerous rooms avoiding obstacles and performing required tasks. You have to use the hot air registers for lift. Addictive.

IBM PD

December Additions

Tom Bardenwerper

Disk #005 Applications

DRAFTC (Directory) Supports: Hercules, CGA, EGA

DRAFTC.EXE: Draft Choice is a fast, object based graphics tool which uses floating point mathematics to record the size, shape, and position of objects you design. An object is a basic element like a line, a circle, a box, or even more complex shapes like many sided polygons (triangles, pentagons, etc.) and Bezier curves. By choosing a mixture of these elements you can create amazingly detailed drawings, impressive graphics, or conceptual schematics.

PCBARTND (Directory) Supports: Hercules, CGA

DRINKS.EXE: Pcbartender is a database type program especially for bartenders. Pcbartender can retrieve recipes by several methods. You can see all the drinks at once, just cocktails, just mocktails, or you can add a drink. When you try to find a recipe you can search by name, ingredient, type, or based on your inventory. There are approximately 100 recipes included. A perfect helper for the holidays!

BEERDATA (directory) Supports: Hercules, CGA

BEER.COM: Beer is a database type program for home brewers. The data base allows you to search for a beer type, enter a new type of beer, and up-date data. The program will calculate the starting and ending specific gravity of a recipe. The program also has beer making directions and an extensive list of recipes.

Disk #006 Applications

LOTOBUST (Directory) Supports: Hercules, CGA

LOTTO.EXE: The lotto buster is a menu driven program for predicting future lottery draws in any state pick-6 lottery. History is accumulated through 104 lottery draws and then processed through several user selected systems to print out lottery ticket selections.

PICKTHEM (Directory) Supports: Hercules, CGA

PCKTHM.EXE: Pickthem is a simple lottery number picker. The program asks you how many sets of numbers you would like generated (1-6) and then promptly displays six numbers per set.

HORSES (Directory) Supports: Hercules, CGA

HORSES.EXE: Horses is a Fast-out-of-the-gate thoroughbred handicapping program designed for the paramutual player. Taking up to 8 entries per race on a dirt track or turf track, Horses lists the projected race results numerically, according to odds and with a graphic bar chart. The program asks for the names of the horses, type of race, distance, and whether the sexes or ages are mixed. Then it asks specific questions about the history of each horse. From this data it projects the results.

WORLD (Directory) Supports: CGA, EGA, VGA

WRLD29.EXE: With the World program it is just like having a globe or atlas in your computer. View any place in the world in various scales. Learn national capitals. Track hurricanes or anything that has a location. Find the distance between locations. Create maps and locate any of over 200 cites in the program or add your own cities or maps.

Atari Interlink for Milwaukee
AIM
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Public Domain

Christmas Specials

Dennis Wilson

MilAtari Ltd. St Public Domain Library Disks are available at the meeting at a price of $3.50 per disk, and through mail order at $4.00 per disk. Special package prices may also be in effect at club meetings for certain disks or quantities of disks. The charge for the disks covers the cost of the media and handling, with all proceeds going to support the activities activities of MilAtari Ltd.

Some of the programs on these disks have been released as shareware and are so documented in the programs themselves. MilAtari Ltd. supports the shareware concept and you are encouraged to make donations to the individual authors should you find their programs useful.

The MilAtari PD Libraries are intended to provide a repository for useful and interesting programs, and each file is tested before inclusion on the disk. We believe that each file is worthy of your consideration. No warranty is expressed nor implied, however, as to their content or usability. Defective disks will be gladly replaced. These disks are made available for sale at the the monthly club meeting and may be ordered in advance by posting a message in the Library Lounge on the club BBS. Librarians of other clubs are encouraged to contact our ST Librarian concerning trading of programs in their respective libraries.

This month, we will be introducing the MilAtari XMAS Disk Set. This consists of 5 double-sided disks with Christmas and Holiday-related items. Some of the programs or images are taken from previous MilAtari disks, but many are brand-new to the Library. The 5 disks are attractively packaged in a plastic diskholder box. The cover art was designed by Armin Baier, a MilAtari member. The MilAtari XMAS Disk Set is priced at $14 for members, and $15 for nonmembers. These disks are being added to the Library as Disks 341-345.

DISK 341 - MilAtari XMAS Disk Set, Disk 1

SNOWBALL: DC Snowball Fight is a two-player game that simulates the thrills, chills, and spills of the popular winter pastime children all around the world enjoy. The program will run with at least 340K of RAM free. It will use as much as 575K of RAM if it is available. When it is run with less RAM, it drops some "features," with the following effects: 1) The big snowball won't be as smooth, 2) The DC sign on the title page won't spin around, and 3) Some sound effects will be left out. The objective of the game is to throw enough snowballs at your opponent to make him surrender and run home. Each time one of your snowballs meets its mark, your opponent's "healthbar"will go down by an amount determined by the size of the snowball. When a player's health bar goes away completely that player runs home to Mom and the other player is the winner.

XMASNITE: XMASNITE - A humorous, computer-related take off on "The Night Before Christmas".

XMAS1986: A picture-and-music program from Michtron. Various Christmas-related pictures using the company name are accompanied by Christmas songs.

DISK 342 - MilAtari XMAS Disk Set, Disk 2

S_WRKSHP: Santa's Workshop - A variation on the arcade game where the clown bounces off a trampoline to prick balloons passing overhead. This one features Santa and rows of Christmas candles streaming by overhead.

XMASRHC: A picture-and-music program. This one shows a outdoor Christmas tree with blinking lights and falling snow accompanied by numerous Christmas songs. To change songs before the prior one is finished, press space bar.

XMAS_IMG: Eight brand new Christmas-related IMG files.

XMAS_MID: Fifty two Christmas-related midi files.

DISK 343 - MilAtari XMAS Disk Set, Disk 3

HOL_IMGS: A folder containing 4 Easter, 7 Thanksgiving, and 3 Valentine-related IMG files.

XMAS_IMG: Seventeen Christmas-related clip art IMG files. Compiled and converted to IMG files by Michelle Gross. Fourteen of these are also on Disk 295.

SANTASMG: It's Christmas time, and in all of the big cities the amount of smog in the air causes poor visibility. The smog is so bad this year that you must help guide Santa through the clouds. The clouds are so dense, that if Santa hits them, it is like crashing into a brick wall. With the help of a joystick, you can help guide Santa and Rudolph through the clouds. TOS 1.0 only. Also on Disk 295.

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ST PD
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DISK 344 - MilAtari XMAS Disk Set, Disk 4

ELFLORD: An interactive text adventure written using the ADVSYS author ing system. It has a fairly extensive vocabulary. In it, you are a wise elf called out of retirement by Santa Claus because Christmas has run amuck. Also on Disk 199 AND 240.

HOL_IMG: A folder containing 13 IMG files relating to miscellaneous holidays, and 2 IMG files relating to St. Patrick's Day.

TANNENBM: O Tannenbaum, A Holiday Tree-Trimming Kit. Another excellent KIDPRG by D.A.Brumleve. Intended for use by children as young as 2 or 3, the mouse isused to choose from a variety of animated and nonanimated decorations to decorate a Christmas tree. The animation of the decorations can then be set into motion while the computer plays "OTannenbaum." From ST-Log.

XMAS: Here in one place are 34 Holiday-related Printmaster Icons. If you are planning on using Printmaster to make your Christmas cards, this is a must-have item. Also on Disk 295.

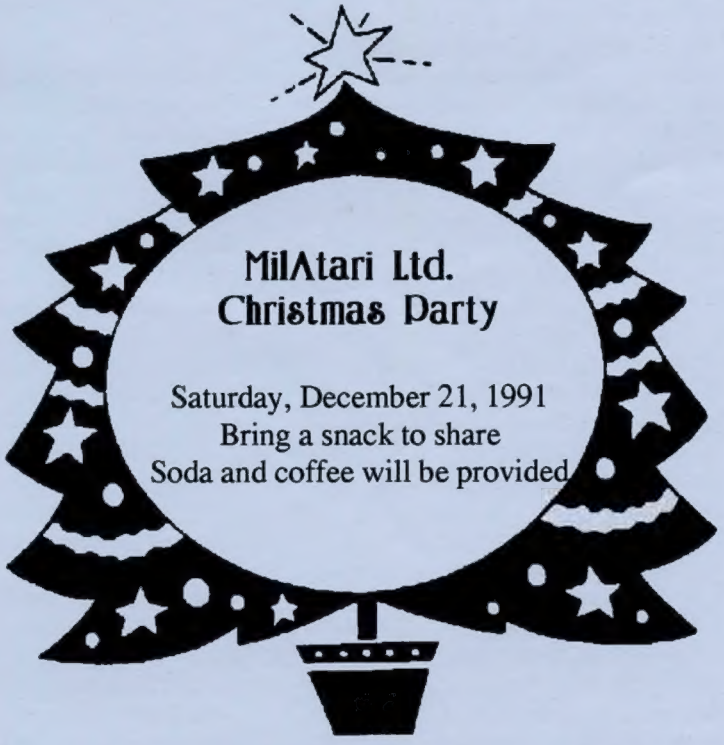
DISK 345 - MilAtari XMAS Disk Set, Disk 5

ALITXMAS: The Alite Xmas Demo. This is a Christmas-related, picture-and-music program. Also on Disk 50.

HOL_IMG: A folder containing 3 Halloween, 2 New Year, and 4 Christmas-related IMG files.

Santa Says

"Call the MilAtari BBS for the latest info. It's your best connect with the North Pole!"



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ComputerFest Report
from page 5

Groh, Mike Fulton, Bob Schuricht, Art Morgan, James Grunke, Don Mandell, Sue Ruck and Don Thomas all joined Festmeister Bob Brodie in working the show (just to drop a _few_ names). The Atari staff didn't just stand around and "look cool" either - they were clearly in attendance to "take care of business", and did just that!

Greg Pratt was particularly impressive, always having time for even the smallest of questions posed by the show-goers. I saw Mr. Pratt in attendance at many of the seminars, including sitting in on the DTP hands-on classes (more about that later too!). I was left with the impression that Mr. Pratt cared very much about the success of this show, and truly enjoyed being in attendance - Mr. Pratt is truly "one of us" and we should be happy that under his guidance Atari Corp. is willing to take significant risks, like the Chicago ComputerFest.

Atari Corp's display - taking up a full 60 feet of floor space, was dominated by the same professional display stands as used at COMDEX and CEPS. All manner of professional solutions were shown in this area - there was an Atari representative or Atari business partner at each workstation smiling and offering assistance to the attendees.

Somewhat of an unexpected surprise for most show-goers was the showing of Atari UNIX system V running on the TT030. Art Pruzynski and Diane Gurrero of Atari's UNIX team were in attendance to show off their progeny. I only got a peek at UNIX on the TT - but it looked quite complete. BTW - the version being shown is the UNIX version currently being shipped to developers.

Nearby, the Atari Entertainment display offered a row of LYNX kiosks loaded with the latest releases (and a few not yet in release) for the Lynx system. Atari provided game designers and staff members to help the new players get started, and to provide insight into the secrets of the games for experienced Lynxsters. I hate singling out people, but in this case it is really deserved - Louie Moskalski of Atari Entertainment was the "man who got things done" for Atari Entertainment. Gawd, I wish I had that level of energy during the show days, Great job Louie!

Hours prior to the actual opening of the show on Saturday, people were beginning to line up in anticipation of getting one of the free promotional items offered by Atari Entertainment and Atari Corp. As a matter of fact, when I stumbled down to the foyer of the convention center at 7:00 AM Saturday, there were already people in line waiting for the 10:00 general show opening. I would estimate that there were more than 300 people waiting for the opening of the doors at 10:00 Saturday - the waiting line stretched from just outside the convention center, past the Quest nightclub and the gift shop, nearly to the front desk itself. The crowd was most patient, and the extra security that th hotel provided was not needed.

To ease the crowd situation somewhat, the Gaming Area in Grand Ballroom "B" was opened at 9:30 by the MilAtari crew. This enabled people to relax and have something to do prior to the actual opening of the show. I must interject that the MilAtari crew led by Lee Musial did just an OUTSTANDING job of handling their area - but this is no real surprise as they have been doing an excellent job of handling the computer gaming portion of the GenCon gaming fair for many years now. Sincere thanks to Clinton Smith of Atari Portable Entertainment newsletter for helping in the gaming area with the LYNX competitions.

The Chicago ComputerFest was the debut of the Lynx "Value Pack", which adds an AC Adpater, Game, ComLynx Cable and carrying case to the basic Lynx package - all for a very special price. The Lynx value packs sold so well during the show that Atari had to take back some of the units that were loaned to MilAtari for the gaming room so that customer orders could be filled! More than one Gameboy diehard had their mind changed by the "hands on" sessions with the Lynx. If Atari would set up a few manned Lynx kiosks on the weekends at malls around the Chicago area (Gurnee Mills, anyone?), they would move a ton of Lynx systems before Christmas.

The opening of the show was barely controlled pandemonium as you would expect - the exhibitors being VERY, VERY busy for the first few hours of the show. Advance ticket sales through local user groups eased the job of the ticket sales people, but attendees were still buying additional tickets at a furious pace all day Saturday.

Most of my time Saturday and Sunday was devoted to keeping the 48 general seminars humming; unfortunately, we had a couple of AV equipment failures that required projection equipment to be shuffled around from room to room so presenters would have what they needed. The presenters took it all with good humor, even those that were scheduled against more popular presentations that drew big crowds.

In addition to these more conventional "presentation" seminars, we offered a series of "instructional" seminars geared to teaching participants the basic and advanced techniques of page layout and desktop publishing on Atari systems. Atari loaned us enough equipment for 20 "hands on" workstations and instructor equipment; we provided a color LCD projection system so that all in attendance could see what the instructor was doing.

ISD Marketing provided master instructor Mario Georgiou to present Calamus classes, and SoftLogik provided the highly talented Dan Weiss to teach the secrets of PageStream. Although some balked at the $15.00 materials cost for these 3-hour presentations, those that attended the sold-out sessions (SoftLogik scheduled a second Intro Class Saturday night to handle those that were on a waiting list and Tim working together at the show; the cross pollination can only do both "worlds" good.

I must say that our exhibitors were truly generous with their door prize donations - among them were the 105 MB HD unit donated by ABCO, the Migraph Hand scanners, and the TT030 Color system donated by Atari. A good estimate of the retail value of the goods given away would approach $10,000.00.

Saturday night brought the Gala Chicago ComputerFest by Atari Banquet and MARC Excellence awards ceremony. The banquet had it's share of surprises (a fire alarm was pulled just prior to the actual start of the Banquet by one of the many Jerry Garcia fans in the hotel for a concert at the nearby Rosemant Horizon), but the biggest surprise was the outstanding turnout - we had to ask the hotel to bring additional tables in for latecomers! The formal portion of the program began with the presentation of the first annual Midwest Atari Regional Council awards for excellence. The MARC award winners were selected for their outstanding contributions

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ComputerFest Report
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to the betterment of the Atari community by the officers of the previously mentioned 9 MARC member-groups.

MARC chairman Hank Vize gave the attendees a brief overview of the purpose and goals of MARC before the actual presentation. It was my pleasure to present Double Click Software, SoftLogik Publishing, and Codehead Software with their nicely enameled plaques as a reminder of their fine work. John Eidsvoog and Charles Johnson clowned on stage during the presentation, but the "table talk" afterwards revealed that both Charles and John were truly moved by the recognition of their efforts.

Next, Bob Brodie, Atari's spokesperson said a few short words, then introduced Atari's President - Mr. Greg Pratt. Mr. Pratt gave a very moving talk about the importance of everyone seated in the room as "Atari's Business Partners" and outlined the immediate plan of attack for Atari in the domestic and international markets. Mr. Pratt's remarks gave the folks assembled a first-hand flavor of what Atari exceutives are thinking and planning for the immediate future. The assembled group apparently liked what they heard based on the standing ovation given Mr. Pratt and the assembled Atari guests.

After the banquet, most participants beat a path for the Double-Click or MilAtari sponsored cocktail parties which (I am told) went on _very_ late.

One of the most gratifying things about hosting a national show of this nature is the cross-section of the Atari community that you meet. One of the more colorful groups in attendance at this show were the Electronic Music / MIDI folk. The music-industry personalities ranged the full spectrum from the dynamic Kest Carter-Morgan and the people of ASTMUM (Montreal Canada User Group), to the multi-talented Bob Lytle of Guitar Plus, to the beautiful Dana Byrd (redheads get my attention every time) of Hybrid Arts. Guitar Plus sponsored a series of "hands on" MIDI instructional seminars that were, unfortunately, sparsely attended. I guess that musicians don't really get cranking until later in the night on weekends, right Bob? Press coverage of the show was outstanding, with John Jainschigg and Peter Donoso representing Atari Explorer with John Nagy representing AtariUser magazine, and an international contingent representing such far-flung places as Peru!

The one question that was on everyone's lips during and after the show was "will you do it again next year?". I must say that ball is firmly in Atari's court - LCACE, as the "little group that could", does not have the financial resources to handle the equipment, hotel, and advertising commitments that Atari was able to guarantee. On the other side of the coin, the physical and emotional demands on the LCACE staff were truly crushing, we are just now starting to recover from the strain of squeezing this puppy out; thinking about next year is just unbearable right now.

Will there be a Chicago ComputerFest by Atari 1992? If you think that there should be, you can help by sending a letter of thanks to Mr. Jack Tramiel or Mr. Greg Pratt of Atari Corporation for their sponsorship. Bob Brodie tells me that letters of this kind make a _big_ difference in shaping Atari policy. Please take the time to make your opinion heard!

I feel badly that I was not able to spend more time with each of our exhibitors and participants - problem solving and unexpected situations kept me busy both days. When I finally did sit down on Sunday after breakdown, I developed severe verigo due to the my body not being in motion. I realize that this is a poor substitute for a personal handshake, but thanks to everyone who participated. I hope that you all enjoyed our efforts as much as it appeared you did.

For myself, after I catch up on a week's worth of sleep, I plan to get my guys together and buy them a beer, maybe two.■

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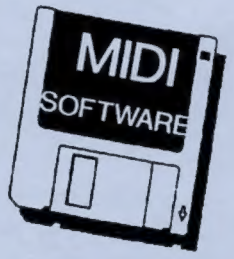

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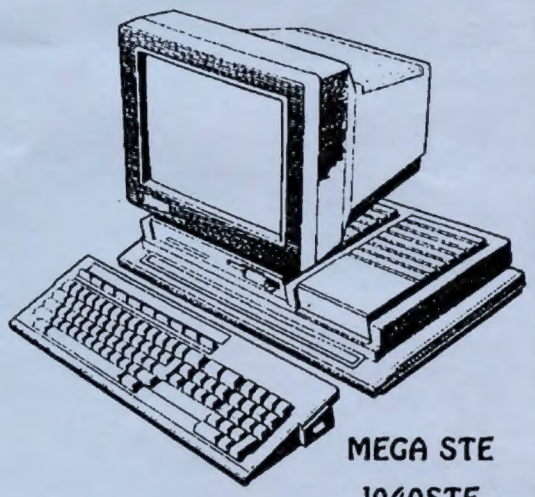

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